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AUTHOR Grady, Michael P.; Mortenson, Robert A.
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ABSTRACT

The authors propose a format for conducting workshops whose goals are the development of programs of continuing education for teachers. The rationale for such inservice teacher improvement is based upon (1) the need to more capably deal with the individual differences among children; (2) the changing nature of the inservice education enterprise; and (3) the interrelationship of the dimensions of governance, mode, delivery, and substance in inservice education programs. The workshop format aims at improving the effectiveness of the continuing (inservice) education process by attending to the improvement of all four dimensions at the same time, since improvement to only one or two of the dimensions has little effect on the value of the entire process. Conduct of workshops is predicated on the interaction of individuals gathered first into role groups (e.g., teachers, administrators, school board members) which, in three meetings, examine existing inservice programs, develop a rationale of needs for training, and revise these needs into a new inservice program. Participants then meet in team groups (e.g., project, university, school district) to examine inservice proposals, develop general goals and activities for realizing them, and construct a plan for continued team functioning. At the conclusion of this procedure, a collaborative relationship should exist among the concerned participants of the continuing education program, and three products should have been created: a model of continuing education, a rationale, and follow-up action plans. (HJB)

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A COLLABORATIVE MODEL FOR DEVELOPING CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAMS

BY

DR. MICHAEL P. GRADY
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
ST. LOUIS UNIVERSITY
221 NORTH GRAND BOULEVARD
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI 63103

TELEPHONE - 314-535-330

STATION - 469

AND

DR. ROBERT A. MORTENSON
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
ANNEX 12B
BOX 688
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA
OMAHA, NEBRASKA 68101

TELEPHONE - 402-554-2352

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A COLLABORATIVE MODEL FOR DEVELOPING CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Continuing education programs for educators are currently receiving attention in school districts, universities, and nationally through Teacher Corps and the new Teacher Center legislation. The term continuing education is used by the authors because it provides for a broader base of learning experiences than the term inservice education. Comprehensive continuing education programs that include inservice and professional development activities for all educators are of concern in this model. Based on the findings of the ISTE Reports[1] (Inservice Teacher Education) coordinated by Bruce Joyce, the authors developed a collaborative model for facilitating continuing education programs. The model is the basis for a workshop which involves concerned people in a collaborative process that yields a product. This product is the basis for developing and implementing collaborative continuing education programs.

Variables Influencing Continuing Education:

Teacher educators have long been concerned with the individual differences among children. This same concern needs to permeate the education teachers receive prior to and during the time they interact with children in a classroom. Continuing education programs must be individualized and assist teachers in developing in their own unique ways.

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[1]Joyce, Bruce R., Kenneth R. Howey, and Sam J. Yarger, "ISTE Concept Project Report I: Issues to Face," (Palo Alto, California, Stanford Center for Research and Development in Teaching, 1976) 36pp.

A second variable affecting continuing education is the change in the control of the entire enterprise. Historically, control of continuing education had been virtually under the exclusive jurisdiction of institutions of higher education. Currently, joint governance of continuing education is evolving that includes teacher organizations, state departments of education, institutions of higher education, local school districts, and community representatives. As continuing education has grown in complexity and as control has shifted, no one single group has been able to completely take over and deliver significant continuing education programs that meet the needs of the unique learners. Continuing education is too intricate for one group to control the resources necessary to provide solutions and programs. Therefore, it is essential to embark upon collaborative ventures designed to achieve maximum results.

A third group of variables associated with continuing education are Governance, Modes, Delivery, and Substance. These dimensions are discussed in the ISTE Report, Issues to Face. Governance is concerned with collaborative efforts among the various persons, agencies, and institutions involved with the continuing education effort. The three levels of Governance are: 1) the authority to create and maintain an inservice unit or center, 2) the authority to govern a center, and 3) the governance of the individual teacher's relationship to a unit or center.

The Modal dimension involves the variety of ways in which continuing education exists. These modes are: 1) job-embedded, 2) job-related, 3) credential-oriented, 4) professional organization-oriented, and 5) self-directed. These modes allow a teacher to be viewed respectively as: 1) an employee of a school, 2) a colleague of other teachers, 3) a student of higher education, 4) a member of a profession, 5) an individual craftsman.

The Delivery dimension involves delivering training where people can get it, in accordance with their needs, and providing long range follow through. The Delivery dimension has three major factors according to the report: 1) incentives, 2) interface, and 3) staff.

The Substantive dimension refers both to the substance of training and the process used to deliver the content. The substance must be relevant to the needs of classroom teachers. The teaching processes identified for teacher training and for working with children are: 1) social interaction, 2) information processing, 3) personalistic, and 4) behavior modification. New content needs as a result of social change and fresh conceptions will need to be addressed by continuing education. These needs include: 1) multicultural education, 2) education of the handicapped, and 3) early childhood education.

The effectiveness of the continuing education venture depends upon the ability of those involved to arrange collaboratively the interaction of the Governance, Modal, Delivery, and Substantive dimensions in a productive manner. This arrangement is, in fact, a very delicate one. Weakness in one dimension is magnified because it undermines the power of the other dimensions. Conversely, improvement in only one dimension alone usually does not significantly improve the overall quality of continuing education. Changes must be made simultaneously in all dimensions for improvement to occur.

The Workshop:

The following procedures operationalize the above framework in a workshop format. This workshop focuses on a collaborative process that produces a product (a continuing education model) which is used to develop and implement continuing education programs. The first consideration is advanced planning. Each participant is given an advanced organizer which contains materials to prepare him for

the discussions. These materials can include national and local publications and program criteria. One publication that is recommended is the previously mentioned Issues to Face. Because the participants will be working in groups, the pre-selection of a leader and recorder for each group well in advance avoids the problems and confusion of a last minute selection process. A facilitator for the workshop must be chosen who is skilled in group process and procedures, and knowledgable about continuing education. A pre-workshop briefing session with the facilitator, group leaders, and recorders is suggested for orientation to the process and expected outcomes.

The participants for the workshop must be role groups who are part of the collaborative design for an inservice program. Examples of possible role groups include teachers, university personnel, school district administrators, school board members, community representatives, and state department personnel. Once the groups that represent the various interests have been formed, the leaders and recorders briefed, the workshop can commence. The participants will meet in Role Groups for three sessions--all the teachers meeting as a group, university personnel as a group, etc.

The first session is designed for the participants to be able to react to the existing continuing education model or one borrowed from another source. An example of this model may be found in Appendix A. As a framework for a model, the four dimensions mentioned earlier are recommended - governance, modes, delivery, and substance. They are headings under which the various elements of a program are listed and prioritized, if desired. This method allows the participants to determine if the program has elements under all four dimensions, if one area is stressed to the neglect of another, etc. At the conclusion of this first session, the participants should have examined and discussed the existing inservice program and prepared a preliminary model that fulfills the interests of that particular group.

In the second role group meeting, the objective is to provide a rationale/defense of decisions made concerning their continuing education model. The procedure to fulfill the objective is first, to make final decisions concerning the continuing education model; second, to generate points to be made in a position paper on the model; third, to outline these points; and fourth, to write an initial draft of the position paper from the outline. Completing the rough draft of the model and position paper is the responsibility of the group leader and recorder. After the rough draft has been completed it is duplicated for each member of the role group that produced it as well as for members of the other role groups.

A third role group session is required in order to revise the position paper written in session two. The procedure is to read the rough draft, discuss needed changes, make final decisions, and put the paper in final form. Also, during this session, there is time to read the drafts from other role groups. At the conclusion of this session, a final draft of the continuing education model and position paper should be completed.

The fourth session brings together the participants in team meetings rather than in role groups. The participants from one project, university, and/or school district meet in a team situation in order to determine if a team relationship is desirable and to plan the "next steps" necessary if the team is to effect continuing education in their area. This time is also an opportunity for the team participants to share reactions from their role group meetings, determine the extent to which they can work together collaboratively, and discuss the problems they may encounter. The team can then determine general goals and objectives of the team, determine activities necessary to achieve goals and objectives, and determine responsibilities. The product of this session is a

plan for continuing to function as a team - to include goals, objectives, activities, dates, and responsibilities.

At the conclusion of this four-session product-process procedure, a collaborative relationship should have been established among the concerned participants of the continuing education program, and three products should have been created: a model of continuing education, a rationale, and follow-up action plans.

Examples of Workshop Implementation:

At a recent workshop, the Teacher Corps MINK (Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas) Network utilized the model for collaborative decision making for designing continuing education programs. Five role groups were selected on the basis of their involvement and ability to facilitate change in the current status of continuing education. Deans from colleges of education, state department of education representatives, teacher organization representatives, university faculty currently involved in continuing education and local school administrators responsible for continuing education were invited.

The participants produced two types of documents. The first was a position paper from each role group defining its rationale for a model of continuing education. The second document was a follow-up action plan describing each Teacher Corps project's plans to implement change in the current status of continuing education in the university and school district with which they are associated.

These follow-up action plans ranged from replication of the workshop process at the local site with other selected role groups to the formation of a consortium of school districts in rural Kansas to implement the model following the four major dimensions. Each local Teacher Corps Project took a leadership

role in facilitating change in the status quo of continuing education to make it more needs-responsive to all involved with the process.

The MINK Network has published a complete report describing the workshop. This report is a description of the model processes used to produce the various position papers and follow-up action plans. This report is available from the MINK Network Office at the University of Nebraska at Omaha; Omaha, Nebraska.

APPENDIX A

DIMENSION	PRIORITY High 1	2	3	4	5 Low	NA
I. GOVERNANCE						
A. Institutional Adoption		2.4				
B. Collaborative Decision Making	1.6					
C. Intern Teams		2.2				
D. Equitable Geographic Distribution			3.0			
E. Management and Evaluation	1.8					
F. Other _____						
_____						
II. MODES						
A. Demonstration Requirements						
1. Training Complex		2.0				
2. Competency Based Teacher Education		2.8				
3. Training for Implementing Alternative School Design		2.0				
4. Interdisciplinary Training Approach			3.0			
5. Training for Systematic Adoption of Research Findings		2.3				
B. Other _____						
_____						
III. DELIVERY						
A. Needs Analyses (Children's Learning Patterns)	1.4					
B. School Staff Focus	1.4					
C. Field Based Instruction		2.2				
D. Local Needs/Considerations	1.6					
E. Other _____						
_____						
IV. SUBSTANCE						
A. Instructional Program						
1. Individualized Instruction	1.2					
2. Evaluating Competencies		2.4				
3. Training for Service to Low Income Families		2.2				
B. Community Based Education	1.4					
C. Diagnostic-Prescriptive	1.8					
D. Multi-Cultural Education		2.1				
E. Other _____						